

59:962) and Garhwal (Whymper, S. L. 1911, *ibid*, 20:1158), thus leaving a gap of about 1000 km. between the latter locality and Sikkim whence reported by Meinertzhagen (*Ibis* 1927:578). The species has also been recorded at Karta (Tibet), 40 km. east of Mt. Everest (Kinneer, N.B., *Ibis* 1922:507 and Hingston, R.W. 1927, *JBNHS* 32:322). As early as 1911 Whymper (*loc. cit.*) remarked: 'It is curious that the existence of this bird should have been overlooked in these parts, as it is fairly common and much in evidence, both from its frequenting the open and from its rattling alarm call.'

In central Nepal I observed this unmistakable species on two occasions in 1964: on 14 June at the headwaters of the Tadi Khola River at c. 4200 m. before reaching the Gosainkund Pass, and on 16 June near one of the Gosainkund lakes at c. 4300 m. in boulder-strewn alpine meadows. In both instances the birds (two males) were feeding on mud and sand by a stream. They were quite shy, the flight distance being some 40 or 50 metres, and disappeared by flying low and fast over the ground and plunging behind a cliff. The species was mentioned incidentally by me in the *Ibis* 1965:400. The scarcity of the Blackbird in the central Himalayas seems to be attributable to its preference for a drier biotope; it is common both in Kashmir and in south western Tibet.

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12. BIRDS AND MAMMALS EATING THE FRUITS OF YELLOW OLEANDER (*THEVETIA PERUVIANA*)

Previous records of birds and mammals eating the fruits of Yellow Oleander (*Thevetia peruviana*), published in this *Journal* are, Koel (50:943-944), Grey Hornbill (51:738), Common Myna (52:207), Brahminy Myna, Redwhiskered Bulbul (60:457), Bat (58:808) and Rat (59:947).

In this paper we record that goats and domestic fowls also eat the fleshy mesocarp of the unripe and the ripe fruits of Yellow Oleander (*Thevetia peruviana*) fallen on the ground. More than half a dozen goats daily feed on the leaves and the fruits of the Yellow Oleander in the compound of our house without showing any ill effect. The goats usually spit the seeds, but occasionally a few seeds are swallowed but these seeds are spat out during regurgitation (It is an effective

